

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/676,366

Examiner

Thu V. Huynh

Applicant(s)

WOOLF ET AL.

Art Unit

2178

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 10/30/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 3-6, 8-28, 36-37 now renumbered as 1-19, 22, 20-21, 23-26, 28-29 and 27 respectively.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Gregory R. Lunt on 1/15/08.

2. The application have been amended as follows:

Please replace claim 1 as follows:

1. In a computing environment for propagating annotations to electronic documents among a plurality of users' computers, a method for sharing handwritten annotation data related to one or more pages of a document among a plurality of users' computers associated with the document, the method comprising:

an act of receiving a first user's handwritten annotations from the first user's computer among a plurality of users' computers, each of the users' computers having annotation access to a public data entry area available to each of the plurality of users' computers, the public data entry area being configured for sharing handwritten annotations received from one or more of the plurality of users' computers with one or more other of the plurality of users' computers such that the received handwritten annotations appear to be written on a common display surface shared among the plurality of users' computers in real time;

an act of determining in a first determination that the first user's handwritten annotations are public data;

an act of automatically writing the handwritten annotations of the first user to the public data entry area in response to the first determination that the first user's handwritten annotations are public data;

an act of displaying a list of users who provided public data;

an act of receiving at least one subscription request from one or more of the plurality of user's computers to subscribe to the first user's handwritten annotations in response to a selection of the first user in the list of users who provided public data;

an act of adding at least one of the plurality of users to a list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first user's handwritten annotations based on the received at least one subscription request;

an act of displaying on the first user's display the list of subscribers to the first user's handwritten annotations;

an act of determining in a second determination that the first user has indicated in the displayed list of subscribers that one or more of the subscribers that are subscribed to the first user's handwritten annotations is to be denied subscription to the first user's handwritten annotations;

based on the second determination, an act of selectively denying on a per-user basis the one or more of the subscribers indicated by the first user to be denied subscription to the first user's handwritten annotations from being added to the list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first user's handwritten annotations;

an act of distributing the first user's handwritten annotations to computers of users who are on the list of subscribers to access the first user's annotations; and

an act of preventing distribution of the first user's handwritten annotations to computers of users who were selectively denied from being added to the list of subscribers subscribed to access the first user's handwritten annotations.

Please replace claim 3 as follows:

3. The method of claim 1 wherein distributing the handwritten annotations comprises combining the first user's handwritten annotations with other handwritten annotations on the public data entry area.

Please replace claim 4 as follows:

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the public data entry area corresponds to a page of a publication, and wherein receiving handwritten annotations comprises receiving handwritten strokes corresponding to the page.

Please replace claim 5 as follows:

5. The method of claim 1 wherein distributing the handwritten annotations to comprising combining the first user's handwritten annotations with other handwritten annotations on a graffiti page.

Please replace claim 6 as follows:

6. The method of claim 5 wherein receiving handwritten annotations comprises receiving handwritten strokes independent of any page of a publication.

Please replace claim 8 as follows:

8. The method of claim 8 wherein distributing the handwritten annotations comprises automatically updating a subscriber.

Please replace claim 9 as follows:

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising, receiving a request from a computing device corresponding to a subscriber, and wherein distributing the handwritten annotations comprises providing the handwritten annotations in response to the request.

Please replace claim 10 as follows:

10. The method of claim 1 further comprising, persisting the handwritten annotations.

Please replace claim 11 as follows:

11. The method of claim 10 further comprising, receiving data corresponding to a page of a publication, and wherein persisting the handwritten annotations comprises persisting the handwritten annotations in association with the page.

Please replace claim 13 as follows:

13. In a computer network having a server's computer and clients' computers for propagating annotations to electronic documents among a plurality of clients' computers, a system for sharing handwritten annotation data related to one or more pages of a document among a plurality of clients' computers associated with the document, the system comprising:

annotation devices that are clients' computers of the server's computer, each of the annotation devices including an annotations program that manages handwritten annotations input by each of a plurality of clients at each of the clients' computers, respectively, each of the clients' computers having annotation access to a public data entry area available to each of the clients' computers, the public data entry area being configured for sharing handwritten annotations received from one or more of the clients' computers with one or more other of the clients' computers such that the received handwritten annotations appear to be written on a common display surface shared among the clients' computers in real time, and includes at least one operating mode configured to write the received handwritten annotations of each of the plurality of clients at each of the clients' computers, respectively to a the public data entry area in response to a determination that the received handwritten annotations are public data;

a determining mechanism that determines that the handwritten annotations of a first client are public data;

a display means that displays a list of clients who provided public data on the clients' display devices and displays a list of subscribers who subscribe to the first client's handwritten annotations;

a subscription determining mechanism that:

receives at least one subscription request from one or more of the clients' computer to subscribe to the first client's handwritten annotations in response to a selection of the first client in the list of clients who provided public data;

adds at least one of the plurality of clients to a list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first client's handwritten annotations based on the received at least one subscription request;

selectively denies on a per-client basis at least one of the clients' computer from being added to the list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first client's handwritten annotations based on the received at least one subscription request;

determines that the first client has indicated in the displayed list of subscribers that one or more of the subscribers that are subscribed to the first client's handwritten annotations is to be denied subscription to the first client's handwritten annotations; and

based on the indicated determination, selectively denying on a per-client basis the one or more of the subscribers indicated by the first client to be denied subscription to the first client's handwritten annotations from being added to the list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first client's handwritten annotations;

a send mechanism that sends the first client's handwritten annotations to the server's computer for distribution to computers of clients who are on the list of subscribers to access the first client's annotations; and

a distribution prevention mechanism that prevents distribution of the first client's handwritten annotations to computers of clients who were selectively denied from being added to the list of subscribers subscribed to access the first client's handwritten annotations.

Please replace claim 16 as follows:

16. The method of claim 13 wherein the annotation program send mechanism provides an identity of the first user, and identifier of the page of the publication and stroke data corresponding the handwritten annotations to the server's computer.

Please replace claim 18 as follows:

18. The method of claim 13 wherein annotations program provides at least one warning to the first client when the operating mode is one in which the input handwritten annotations are to be published.

Please replace claim 19 as follows:

19. The method of claim 13 wherein one operating mode in which received handwritten annotations are to be published comprises a presentation page notation mode in which handwritten annotations are distributed by the server's computer to subscribed clients' computers.

Please replace claim 20 as follows:

20. The method of claim 13 wherein one operating mode in which received handwritten annotations are to be published comprises a shared canvas mode corresponding to a publication page in which handwritten annotations are distributed by the server's computer to any other clients' computer in association with that publication page.

Please replace claim 21 as follows:

21. The method of claim 13 wherein one operating mode in which received handwritten annotations are to be published comprises a graffiti page canvas mode in which handwritten annotations are distributed by the server's computer to any other clients' computer.

Please replace claim 22 as follows:

22. The method of claim 13 wherein the annotations device includes a receive mechanism that receives handwritten annotations published by at least one other client and provides the handwritten annotations to the annotation program for presentation.

Please replace claim 23 as follows:

23. The method of claim 21 wherein the handwritten annotation device combines the received published handwritten annotations with the handwritten annotations input by a client for displaying to that client.

Please replace claim 36 as follows:

36. The method of claim 38, further comprising using a time-based filter to limit the handwritten annotations displayed with the document on the public data entry area to those handwritten annotations input before a certain time or date.

Please replace claim 37 as follows:

37. The method of claim 38, further comprising using an author-based filter to limit the annotations displayed with the document on the public data entry area to handwritten annotations input by one or more specified users.

Please replace claim 38 as follows:

38. In a computing environment for propagating annotations to electronic documents among a plurality of users' computers, a method for sharing handwritten annotation data related to one or more pages of a document among a plurality of users' computers associated with the document, the method comprising:

an act of receiving a first user's handwritten annotations from the first user's computer among a plurality of users' computers, each of the users' computers having annotation access to a public data entry area available to each of the plurality of users' computers, the public data entry area being configured for sharing handwritten annotations received from one or more of the plurality of users' computers with one or more other of the plurality of users' computers such that the received handwritten annotations appear to be written on a common display surface shared among the plurality of users' computers in real time;

an act of determining in a first determination that at least a portion of the handwritten annotations are public handwritten annotations and that at least a portion of the handwritten annotations are private handwritten annotations;

an act of managing how the public and private handwritten annotations are shared among a plurality of users' computers including:

- an act of managing the sharing of the public handwritten annotations including:

- an act of automatically writing the at least a portion of the public handwritten annotations of the first user to the public data entry area in response to the first determination in a first color associated with the public handwritten annotations; and

- an act of the first user subscribing to the first user's public handwritten annotations such that the first user is enabled to see what other subscribers, who subscribe to the first user's public handwritten annotations, are seeing without the first user's private annotations also appearing on a display of the first user; and

- an act of managing the sharing of the private handwritten annotations including:

- an act of displaying a list of users who provided private handwritten annotations for the users to subscribe to;

- an act of receiving at least one subscription request from one or more of the plurality of users' computers to subscribe to the first user's private handwritten annotations in response to a selection of the first user in the list of users who provided private handwritten annotations;

an act of adding at least one of the plurality of users to a list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first user's private handwritten annotations based on the received subscription request;

an act of displaying on the first user's display the list of subscribers to the first user's private handwritten annotations;

an act of determining in a second determination that the first user has indicated in the displayed list of subscribers that one or more of the subscribers that are subscribed to the first user's private handwritten annotations is to be denied subscription to the first user's private handwritten annotations;

based on the second determination, an act of selectively denying on a per-user basis the one or more users indicated by the first user to be denied subscription to the first user's private handwritten annotations from being added to the list of subscribers that are subscribed to access the first user's handwritten annotations;

an act of distributing the first user's private handwritten annotations to computers of users who are on the list of subscribers to the first user's private annotations in a second color associated with private handwritten annotations; and

an act of preventing distribution of the first user's private handwritten annotations to computers of users who were selectively

denied from being added to the list of subscribers subscribed to access the first user's private handwritten annotations.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Regarding independent claims 1, 13 and 38 now renumbered as claims 1, 11 and 27 respectively, the feature of selecting, at computers of users who subscribe to a first user's handwritten annotations, the first user in a displayed list of users who provided public data that are shared among users' computers in real time, adding the users who subscribed to the first user's handwritten annotation to a subscribers list so that the first's user handwritten annotations are distributed to the subscribers based on the subscribers list; the first user selectively indicates in a displayed list of the subscribers who subscribed to the first user's handwritten annotation, at the first user's computer, that one or more of the subscribers is denied, so that the denied subscribers are not added to the subscribers list and the first's user handwritten annotations are prevented to be distributed to the subscribers that are denied by the first user are not shown and would not have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention in view of the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thu V. Huynh whose telephone number is (571) 272-4126. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen S. Hong can be reached on (571) 272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Thu V. Huynh
January 22, 2008.